

in good medical shape, but two-thirds of the 17- to 24-year-olds that volunteer are disqualified. The number one reason? They are overweight. We have too many young people who are too big to join up.

This Nation as a whole cannot continue to travel the ever-widening path of obesity because large people don't fit into the military. As the size of the military unfortunately trims down, the waistline of those who apply continues to grow.

Mr. Speaker, overweight kids have become a national security issue.

And that's just the way it is.

PENSION-KILLING BILL FALLS SHORT

(Mr. TERRY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. TERRY. Mr. Speaker, I am proud today that we are going to take up a bill to deny a Member who has been convicted of bribery their pension.

Over a year ago, I introduced the first bill to deny a Member a pension when they have been convicted of a felony such as bribery. Two of my other Republican colleagues stood with me at that press conference and also submitted their own bills. It was actually brought up for a vote last May, and amazingly the Democratic leadership in total voted against denying pensions to Members of the House of Representatives convicted of bribery, but yet we stand here today with a new Member introducing a bill that falls substantially short.

And, by the way, I am happy that this bill is coming to the floor. I really believe it has been the unified pressure of MARK STEVEN KIRK, JOHN SHADEGG, and myself for the last year, including the first day of the session this year, in coming to the House floor and saying we need this bill. That is the reason that it is here today, even though we are being denied our participation in that process.

RECALL DESIGNEE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker of the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, January 22, 2007.

Hon. KAREN L. HAAS,
Clerk of the House of Representatives, H-154,
The Capitol, Washington, DC.

DEAR MADAM CLERK: Pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 1, and also for purposes of such concurrent resolutions of the current Congress as may contemplate my designation of Members to act in similar circumstances, I hereby designate Representative Steny Hoyer of Maryland to act jointly with the Majority Leader of the Senate or his designee, in the event of my death or inability, to notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, of any reassembly under any such concurrent resolution. In the event of the death or inability of that designee, the alternate Members of the House listed in the letter bearing this date

that I have placed with the Clerk are designated, in turn, for the same purposes.

Sincerely,

NANCY PELOSI,
Speaker.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken after 6:30 p.m. today.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH 2007

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 29) supporting the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month 2007.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 29

Whereas mentoring is a longstanding concept in which a dependable adult provides guidance, support, and encouragement to facilitate a young person's social, emotional, and cognitive development;

Whereas high-quality mentoring promotes positive outcomes for young people, including an increased sense of industry and competency, a boost in academic performance and self-esteem, and improved social and communications skills;

Whereas research on mentoring shows that participation in a high-quality mentoring relationship successfully reduces the incidence of risky behavior, delinquency, absenteeism, and academic failure in young people;

Whereas mentoring, in addition to being beneficial for those being mentored, is also extremely rewarding for those serving as mentors;

Whereas quality programs that encourage young people to learn about mentoring and to become mentors, such as programs that recruit high school students to mentor younger children, are important and have the potential to create high-quality mentors at an early age;

Whereas mentoring relationships have grown dramatically in the past 15 years, now reaching 3 million young Americans, because of the remarkable creativity, vigor, and resourcefulness of the thousands of mentoring programs and millions of volunteer mentors in communities throughout the Nation;

Whereas, in spite of the progress made to increase mentoring, our Nation has a serious "mentoring gap," with nearly 15 million young people currently in need of mentors;

Whereas a recent study confirmed that one of the most critical challenges that mentoring programs face is recruiting enough mentors to help close the mentoring gap;

Whereas in December 2006, the President designated January 2007 as National Mentoring Month to call attention to the critical role mentors play in helping young people realize their potential;

Whereas the month-long celebration of mentoring will encourage more individuals and organizations, including schools, businesses, nonprofit organizations, faith institutions, and foundations, to become engaged in mentoring across our Nation; and

Whereas National Mentoring Month will build awareness of mentoring and recruit more individuals to become mentors, thus helping close our Nation's mentoring gap: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of individuals and groups who promote mentoring and who are observing National Mentoring Month with appropriate ceremonies and activities to further promote awareness of and volunteer involvement with youth mentoring;

(3) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of caring adults and students who are already volunteering as mentors; and

(4) encourages more adults and students to volunteer as mentors.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to House Resolution 29 into the RECORD and to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today, Mr. Speaker, to honor those who make a difference in the lives of our young people across the United States. This January marks the National Mentoring Month 2007, a month-long event honoring those who are mentors. This event also draws attention to the great need for additional volunteer mentors.

As we know, Mr. Speaker, many of our children can become lost at an early age without a responsible adult to show them the way. Our children need to know that somebody older cares, and that is what mentoring is all about, showing our kids that we care. Unfortunately, many of our children do not have such an adult in their lives, and without a solid role model, the consequences for our children can be detrimental.

Mr. Speaker, a third of those entering high school do not graduate and will face limited job prospects, according to the Government Accountability Office. This alarming statistic I think would be lower if each one of these kids had a solid mentor to stress the importance of education.

There is no substitute for a healthy relationship with an adult. A caring adult is one of the most important aspects of adolescent development. When a responsible and reliable adult becomes a mentor, the benefits to the mentee last a lifetime.

Another aspect of mentoring sometimes that we overlook are the vast

benefits to the mentors themselves. Helping a younger person find their way can be extremely fulfilling, and often those who become a mentor continue to volunteer throughout their lives.

Chris Warren became a mentor to Joshua Becerra in my hometown of San Diego through the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program in 1999. As a mentor, Chris taught Joshua the value of education and encouraged him to study hard in school. Joshua is now a student at High Tech High School and has already visited UCLA, San Diego State University and other campuses trying to decide where to attend college.

As a role model, the relationship has given Chris a healthier perspective on what is important in life, that is, helping others.

The relationship between Joshua and Chris shows what a mentor can do for a young person, and it also shows the joy it can bring to the mentor.

Millions of adults nationwide have similar relationships with children who face problems at home or struggle at school. Unfortunately, research shows that about 15 million children across the United States are in need of a good role model.

This resolution calls on more adults to make a difference in the lives of our young people, and we in Congress also need to heed this call. Federal programs that encourage mentoring need our support. The Mentoring Children of Prisoners program began in 2001 to provide guidance and friendship to children with at least one incarcerated parent. Funding for the program was targeted for a 20 percent reduction for the current fiscal year. Funding for a number of mentoring programs through the Department of Education was targeted for considerable reductions as well. I urge my colleagues to increase our support for these programs and to put a priority on mentoring.

We must also encourage programs that recruit young people to become mentors to those who are younger. It is these programs that will help create a cycle of mentoring between the generations.

The bottom line: our children need strong, responsible mentors.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend the millions of adults, and there are millions of them out there, who are mentoring our children, and call on more adults to become role models to those who are in need.

Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker, for the opportunity to bring this resolution to the House floor to call attention to this worthy cause on the occasion of National Mentoring Month 2007. I urge its passage today.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 29, which cele-

brates mentors who are positively impacting the lives of young people and highlights the need for additional mentors to make themselves available to America's youth.

I applaud Representative SUSAN DAVIS' continued efforts to draw attention and support to this very important issue, and I appreciate her dedicated leadership in this area.

Mentors give their time and energy to improve the lives of American young people who increasingly spend less time with concerned adult role models. According to the National Mentoring Institute, young people with mentors are roughly half as likely as those without mentors to begin using illegal drugs, 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol, and 50 percent less prone to absenteeism from school. The positive effects of mentoring also include the improvement of academic achievement, a reduction in violent behavior, and a higher self-esteem.

In December 2006, President Bush proclaimed January 2007 as National Mentoring Month, giving public recognition to mentors who serve as role models and provide quality involvement and interaction in the lives of America's youth.

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As the President said, "Through friendship and encouragement, mentors can help prepare young Americans for a hopeful future."

By honoring mentors and mentoring programs, we recognize the importance of mentoring programs implemented in our local schools and communities. We also draw attention to the components of a quality program, including appropriate screening of potential mentors and careful matching of youth with adults who have a genuine interest in providing guidance and being exemplary role models.

Mentoring programs are varied and unique. They can be school-based or faith-based, and they may be established through community organizations or corporate initiatives. I encourage people across the country to take the time to discover what mentoring programs exist in their communities and see what they can do to help. Many volunteers are needed to meet the growing demand for mentors.

Again, I am pleased to recognize the important work of mentors and the quality mentoring programs, and I urge Members to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, does the gentleman have any other speakers on that side of the aisle?

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, there are no further speakers.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I really am pleased to be here on behalf of this resolution today. I urge and thank those who have continued to volunteer as mentors in our communities to continue on with those efforts, and I

urge that those adults who have not embarked on mentoring think about it and join with some organizations that could help them move forward and help many of our young people who are in the community today and who need their help, their support and certainly the caring that they bring.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 29, to support the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month. As Chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus, I would like to thank the gentlewoman from California, Mrs. DAVIS, for introducing this bill to highlight the importance of mentoring our youth.

Mr. Speaker, today many youth face temptations that often lead them down destructive paths and it is vitally important that we provide guidance that helps them make good decisions.

Mentors have been an integral part of society for many years, dating back to Ancient Greece. The Greek poet Homer wrote in the *Odyssey*, that when Odysseus left to fight in the Trojan War, he charged Mentor, his wise old friend, with the task of caring for his son, Telemachus, and teaching him wisdom. Since then, the word mentor has come to mean a wise and responsible tutor or an experienced person who advises, guides, teaches, challenges, corrects, and serves as a model.

In our society today, mentors exist in many different environments. There are mentors in professional settings who guide apprentices by teaching them how to effectively perform in the workplace. There are mentors in academic settings who guide students, teaching them how to reach and maintain high scholastic achievement. There are mentors in community groups who guide their protégés through life issues, teaching them how to be productive citizens. There are mentors in spiritual and church groups who advise others through their spiritual growth. In all cases, they are very important and essential to the success of the youth that they mentor.

Who needs mentors?

There are 35.2 million young people ages 10–18 in the U.S. today; of those young people: 1 out of 4 lives with only one parent; 1 out of 10 was born to teen parents; 1 out of 5 lives in poverty; 1 out of 10 will not finish high school.

About half of young Americans—17.6 million young people—want or need caring adult mentors to help them succeed in life. Of those 17.6 million young people, only 2.5 million are currently in formal mentoring relationships.

That leaves 15.1 million youth still in need of formal mentoring relationships. We call this our nation's "mentoring gap."

Mr. Speaker, imagine if every child had a mentor—just one person whom they could look up to and go to for advice and guidance. Imagine how many young lives could be positively impacted. We could create the avenues and encouragement to ensure that all of our children receive the proper education. Too many of our youth are not being properly advised and guided on the importance of getting an education.

Mentors can help give those youth living in poverty to strive towards a brighter future for themselves. Every child could benefit from having someone in his or her life to turn to for advice and help in the time of need.

National research has shown that children who have mentors are more confident in their

academic performance, able to get along better with their families, 46 percent less likely to begin using illegal drugs, 27 percent less likely to begin using alcohol and 52 percent less likely to skip school. The positive relationships and reinforcement that mentors provide is clearly effective.

I applaud the efforts of the mentors in our nation who encourage and motivate our youth to realize their worth and become productive citizens. I urge my colleagues to join me in thanking and supporting them by passing this resolution, H. Res. 29.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 29, which has been introduced in recognition of the goals and ideals of National Mentoring Month for 2007. Young people today are confronted with many challenges in life. They can find the confidence to overcome many of these challenges through a mentor.

The benefits of a mentor are immeasurable. We take this opportunity today through consideration of this resolution to honor those mentors who unselfishly give of their time to encourage and support students across our country. Mentors provide important guidance and friendship to students and they serve as positive role models in our community. Mentors listen and above all, they care.

Mentors leave an indelible imprint on our minds and hearts. I, as well as many of my colleagues, had mentors that helped us shape our aspirations and achieve our goals. The confidence and support that they provide is something that every young person deserves.

Unfortunately, there are not enough mentors for the millions of children who want or need them. Currently, as this resolution notes, approximately 15 million young people are in need of mentors across our country. As we celebrate National Mentoring Month, let us commit ourselves to raising awareness and to promoting the rewards of mentoring for mentors, our children, our communities and our country.

I also take this opportunity today to commend the young people who participate in mentoring programs. Their involvement in mentoring partnerships demonstrates their personal commitment to improve the lives of others. Let us continue to encourage them by providing additional opportunities and resources to enhance and reinforce their mentoring work. I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this resolution.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 29.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those voting have responded in the affirmative.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the

Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 51) honoring the contributions of Catholic schools.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 51

Whereas America's Catholic schools are internationally acclaimed for their academic excellence, but provide students more than a superior scholastic education;

Whereas Catholic schools ensure a broad, values-added education emphasizing the life-long development of moral, intellectual, physical, and social values in America's young people;

Whereas the total Catholic school student enrollment for the 2005–2006 academic year was about 2,400,000 and the student-teacher ratio was 15 to 1;

Whereas Catholic schools teach a diverse group of students;

Whereas more than 27 percent of school children enrolled in Catholic schools are from minority backgrounds, and nearly 14 percent are non-Catholics;

Whereas Catholic schools produce students strongly dedicated to their faith, values, families, and communities by providing an intellectually stimulating environment rich in spiritual, character, and moral development;

Whereas in the 1972 pastoral message concerning Catholic education, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops stated: "Education is one of the most important ways by which the Church fulfills its commitment to the dignity of the person and building of community. Community is central to education ministry, both as a necessary condition and an ardently desired goal. The educational efforts of the Church, therefore, must be directed to forming persons-in-community; for the education of the individual Christian is important not only to his solitary destiny, but also the destinies of the many communities in which he lives."; and

Whereas January 28 to February 3, 2007, has been designated as Catholic Schools Week by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals of Catholic Schools Week, an event co-sponsored by the National Catholic Educational Association and the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and established to recognize the vital contributions of America's thousands of Catholic elementary and secondary schools; and

(2) congratulates Catholic schools, students, parents, and teachers across the Nation for their ongoing contributions to education, and for the key role they play in promoting and ensuring a brighter, stronger future for this Nation.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to H. Res. 51 into the RECORD and to revise and extend their remarks.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California?

There was no objection.

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Without objection, Mr. Speaker, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI) and request that he control the balance of my time.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 51 honoring National Catholic Schools Week and the tremendous contributions that Catholic schools make to our country. Since 1974, Catholic Schools Week has celebrated the important role that these institutions play in America and their excellent reputation for providing a strong academic and moral education, as well as teaching community responsibility and outreach.

I am proud to sponsor this resolution as my first resolution of this new Congress, and I would also like to thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. FOSSELLA) for his work on this resolution. Unfortunately Mr. FOSSELLA today has been unable to make it. He is stuck in New York today. But he would like to be here also to speak of his support for this resolution on Catholic Schools Week.

This year's theme of Catholic Schools Week is "Catholic Schools: The Good News in Education." This theme has multiple meanings for Catholic schools. At the center of Catholic education is the "Good News" or Gospel of Jesus and salvation. Jesus taught love and service. And the history of Catholic schools reveals an ongoing emphasis on the Gospel values of reaching out and serving others.

But the "good news" in Catholic education is also the news of success in shaping the lives of so many young men and women. Nationally about 2.4 million young people are enrolled in nearly 8,000 Catholic schools. These schools have more than 160,000 full-time professional staff, boasting a student/teacher ratio of 15:1. On average, Catholic school students surpass other students in math, science and reading in the three grade levels of the NAPST test. The graduation rate for all Catholic high school students is 95 percent, and 83 percent of Catholic high school graduates go on to college. These are amazing statistics in America today.

Catholic schools are also highly effective in educating minority students and disadvantaged youth. The percentage of minority students in Catholic schools has more than doubled in the